

June 10, 1999

Dockets Management Branch
Food and Drug Administration
Dept. of Health and Human Services
12420 Parklawn Drive, Room 1-23
Rockville, MD 20857

4753 '99 JUN 23 A9:49

Re: docket # 98P-0203/CP

Dear Sirs;

I am writing to express my horror regarding the horrible practice of forced molting (intentional starvation) of laying hens. It is cruel, it is dangerous to our health, and it is a disgrace that it is happening in this country in this day and age.

It is my understanding that forced molting is the horrendous practice of withholding food for up to 2 weeks from these hens, so that one last batch of eggs can be produced before the hens are slaughtered. As a result of this cruelty and unabashed greed, thousands of hens die a tortuous death by starvation. Those who survive shed their feathers and lose up to 35% of their body weight. This hideous practice is so cruel that it has been banned in the UK since 1987, and most European countries limit the length of food deprivation to a single day. It should be banned in the US as well.

Research done by Peter Holt of the USDA has shown that this forced molting greatly increases the frequency and severity of Salmonella enteritis among hens. The result is a sick bird and a contaminated egg, but of course the egg producer makes a few more bucks. Not only do the hens suffer, but now people are in greater danger of becoming ill. You should be ashamed of yourselves for allowing this to continue.

Christine Miller

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98P-0203

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